

Message Text

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51
ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 CU-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 AID-20 PC-04 DRC-01 /155 W
----- 013887

P R 031023Z DEC 73
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1375
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 8108

EO 11652 GDS
TAGS: PINT KS
SUBJ: CHURCH PROTESTS CONTINUE

1. CHURCH PROTESTS IN SEOUL CONTINUED OVER THE WEEKEND. ON SUNDAY DEC 2, A DEMONSTRATION TOOK PLACE AT HYONGCHE METHODIST CHURCH. AFTER MORNING SERVICES A GROUP OF 22 PEOPLE LED BY EVANGELIST KIM HONG-KI MARCHED INTO STREET CARRYING PLACARD WITH SLOGAN "DICTATORIAL REGIME STEP DOWN" AND DEMANDING:

- A. RELEASE ARRESTED STUDENTS;
- B. RESTORE FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND PRESS;
- C. STOP CAMPUS SURVEILLANCE;
- D. STOP CHURCH SURVEILLANCE.

POLICE ARRESTED DEMONSTRATORS, BUT RELEASED 18 IN THE EVENING INCLUDING REF KIM. CHRISTIAN SOURCE SAYS FOUR ARE STILL BEING HELD. PARENTS OF REV KIM WHO TRIED TO BRING FOOD TO PRISONERS MORNING OF DEC 3 WERE ALSO TAKEN INTO CUSTODY. METHODIST CHURCH LEADERS MET MONDAY, DEC 3 AND FORMED ACTION

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COMMITTEE TO AID HYONGCHE PRISONERS.

2. A SECOND DEMONSTRATION WAS ATTEMPTED AT CHUNGHYUN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ON DEC 2 BUT POLICE WHO HAD BEEN ALERTED, INTERCEPTED MARCHERS UPON LEAVING CHURCH THUS ENDING PROTEST. THIRD DEMONSTRATION WAS BRIEFLY STAGED ON DEC 1 BY SOME HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN YARD OF KYUNGDONG CHURCH, BUT QUICKLY BROKEN UP BY POLICE.

3. IN OTHER DEVELOPMENT NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES OFFICIAL INFORMED EMBOFF THAT CHURCH LEADERS HAVE LITTLE FAITH THAT DEC 3 CABINET CHANGE WILL BRING SIGNIFICANT POLICY CHANGES AND THEY WILL THEREFORE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT PROTESTS. HOWEVER, THEY SEE SOME HOPE IN ELIMINATION OF YI HU-RAK AND POSSIBLY GREATER INFLUENCE OF KIM CHONG-PIL. SAID CHURCH LEADERS HAVE LITTLE FAITH IN NEW ROK-CIA CHIEF SHIN CHIK-SU, WHOM HE SAID THEY REGARD AS NO DIFFERENT FROM EX CIA CHIEF YI.

4. ACCORDING TO NCCC GENSEC KIM KWAN SUK, ROK-CIA HAS PLANNED A MEETING WITH CHURCH LEADERS ON DEC 6. KIM SAID CARDINAL KIM HAS ALSO BEEN INVITED TO DISCUSS CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS WITH UNNAMED HIGH GOVERNMENT LEADERS. REV KIM SAID HE AND CARDINAL CONFERRED ON JOINT APPROACH TO ROKG AND AGREED THAT GREATER FREEDOM AND CHANGE OF YUSHIN CONSTITUTION REMAIN CONDITIONS FOR IMPROVING CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS. KIM SAID A MAJOR JOINT CATHOLIC-PROTESTANT PROTEST MEETING IS PLANNED FOR DEC 16 AT YMCA AT THE END OF CHRISTIAN PROTEST PRAYER WEEK. HE INDICATED THAT CARDINAL KIM HAS AGREED TO BE KEYNOTE SPEAKER.
UNDERHILL

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, CHURCH STATE RELATIONS, RELIGIOUS GROUPS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 DEC 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SEOUL08108
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SEOUL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731249/aaaabjtm.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 NOV 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14-Nov-2001 by smithrj>; APPROVED <19-Dec-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHURCH PROTESTS CONTINUE
TAGS: PINT, KS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005